



Wood Products Mission Benefits Wisconsin Businesses

Release Date: May 23, 2013

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MADISON – Entering into new international markets usually can be a long process. But for a few Wisconsin companies, that process was shortened dramatically because they were in the right place at the right time.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) led a Wood Business Development Mission to China two months ago, and already participants are benefitting from their experience. The March Mission included one-on-one business meetings, participation in the premier trade show, Interzum Guangzhou and individualized trade assistance in Shanghai. Companies received assistance with travel logistics, ground support, daily itineraries and interpreters during the 10-day mission.

“On the Wood Products Mission, Wisconsin companies established contacts with Chinese buyers, gained insight into the international lumber market and increased understanding of Chinese business culture,” said Jennifer Lu, a DATCP Economic Development Consultant. “By taking advantage of this new knowledge, mission participants are already seeing results and generating additional export sales.”

Granite Valley Forest Products, Inc. of Marathon City and New London began exporting several years ago, but the company participated in the China Wood Business Development Mission in an effort to increase sales internationally and diversify its markets. Back in Wisconsin after the Mission, the company continued to nurture and build on the relationships made with people the delegation had recently met in China. As a result, Granite City product has already been shipped to six new customers with hopes they will become regular business customers in the future.

Krueger Lumber Company of Valders was another Wisconsin company that joined the Wisconsin China Wood Business Development Mission. By participating in the trip, Krueger Lumber met new customers and gained a better appreciation of the Chinese market. DATCP assisted businesses like Krueger Lumber in lining up booths for the trade show and arranging one-on-one business meetings.

The demand for American hardwoods continues to increase with Chinese companies importing hardwoods for flooring, home furnishings and other uses. U.S. wood exports to China grew by 71% in 2012. Last year, Wisconsin companies exported \$18 million in lumber, wood flooring and other wood products to China.

“The Chinese marketplace is very diverse, and it is important to invest in market research before you export to target the appropriate consumers,” concluded Lu. “By focusing on one region at a time and knowing your customers, Wisconsin businesses are able to meet the demand for U.S. hardwoods by the booming middle class in China.”

A reliable U.S. supply chain, management, and a competitive exchange rate make U.S. hardwoods desirable in China. The diversity, sustainability, versatility and aesthetic appeal of U.S. hardwoods meet the taste of the Chinese consumers.

The Wisconsin Wood Products Mission was coordinated by DATCP, the Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and the American Hardwood Export Council. Funding was partially provided by a State Trade and Export Promotion grant from the Small Business Association.



The demand for U.S. lumber continues to grow in China. In this picture, Krueger Lumber Company of Valders participated in a one-on-one meeting during the China Wood Business Development Mission in March.

Trade missions are just one service of the Wisconsin International Trade Team at DATCP to help Wisconsin companies succeed in their exporting efforts. Services are available for those new to exporting and seasoned in international business. Other assistance provided by the Trade Team includes one-on-one consultations, educational seminars, buyers missions and market research.

The Wisconsin International Trade Team will continue to work to enhance the competitiveness of Wisconsin's forestry industry in China. To learn more about services available, visit <http://datcp.wi.gov/Business/Exports>.

Contact the Trade Team at 1-800-462-5237 or international@wisconsin.gov. You can also connect with DATCP on Twitter at twitter.com/widatcp or Facebook at facebook.com/widatcp.

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